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The Everglades GCSA got into the Christmas spirit early this year when they donated \$4,000 to the Children's Home Society at their annual chapter Christmas tournament. From left Mark Shoemake, assistant superintendent, LaPlaya Golf Club; Greg Maze, CGCS, Twin Eagles Golf & CC; Odell Spainhour, Energized Water Solutions, "Cadillac Winner;" Kyle D. Sweet, EGCSA president, The Sanctuary Golf Club; Roseann Albertario, Children's Home Society of Florida, executive director; Wayne Kappauf, CGCS, EGCSA golf committee chairman, Island CC; Brian Beckner, superintendent, LaPlaya Golf Club.

It Was a Good Friday

On Friday, Dec. 12, the Everglades Golf Course Superintendents Association hosted its third annual Members-Only Christmas Tournament and Gift

Drive to benefit the Children's Home Society of Southwest Florida. Brian Beckner, golf course superintendent and his staff hosted the event at the newly completed

LaPlaya Golf Club in Naples. A full field of 124 golfers provided gift donations at the registration table filling two SUVs driven away by Children's Home Society volunteers. The golfers also participated in purchasing raffle tickets for a 1969 Cadillac Coupe de Ville. Throughout November and

December a total of 800 Cadillac raffle tickets were sold raising \$4,000 in donation money; all proceeds going to benefit the Children's Home Society of Florida, Southwest Florida Division. Odell Spainhour of Energized Water Solutions was the lucky winner of the 1969 Cadillac.

Southwest Florida's local NBC affiliate, WBBH Channel 2, covered the event on the 6 p.m. news, highlighting the association's involvement with the Children's Home Society and showing off some golf play. The news was just in time to be seen by all golfing participants at dinner in the LaPlaya clubhouse.

With over \$4,000 in golfer awards and raffle prizes given out after golf, it was a great time for everyone. The event's great prizes were possible due to an outpouring of generous sponsorships from area sales associates.

To close the night, EGCSA presented a \$4,000 check to Roseann Albertario, executive director of the Children's Home Society of Florida.

Kyle Sweet

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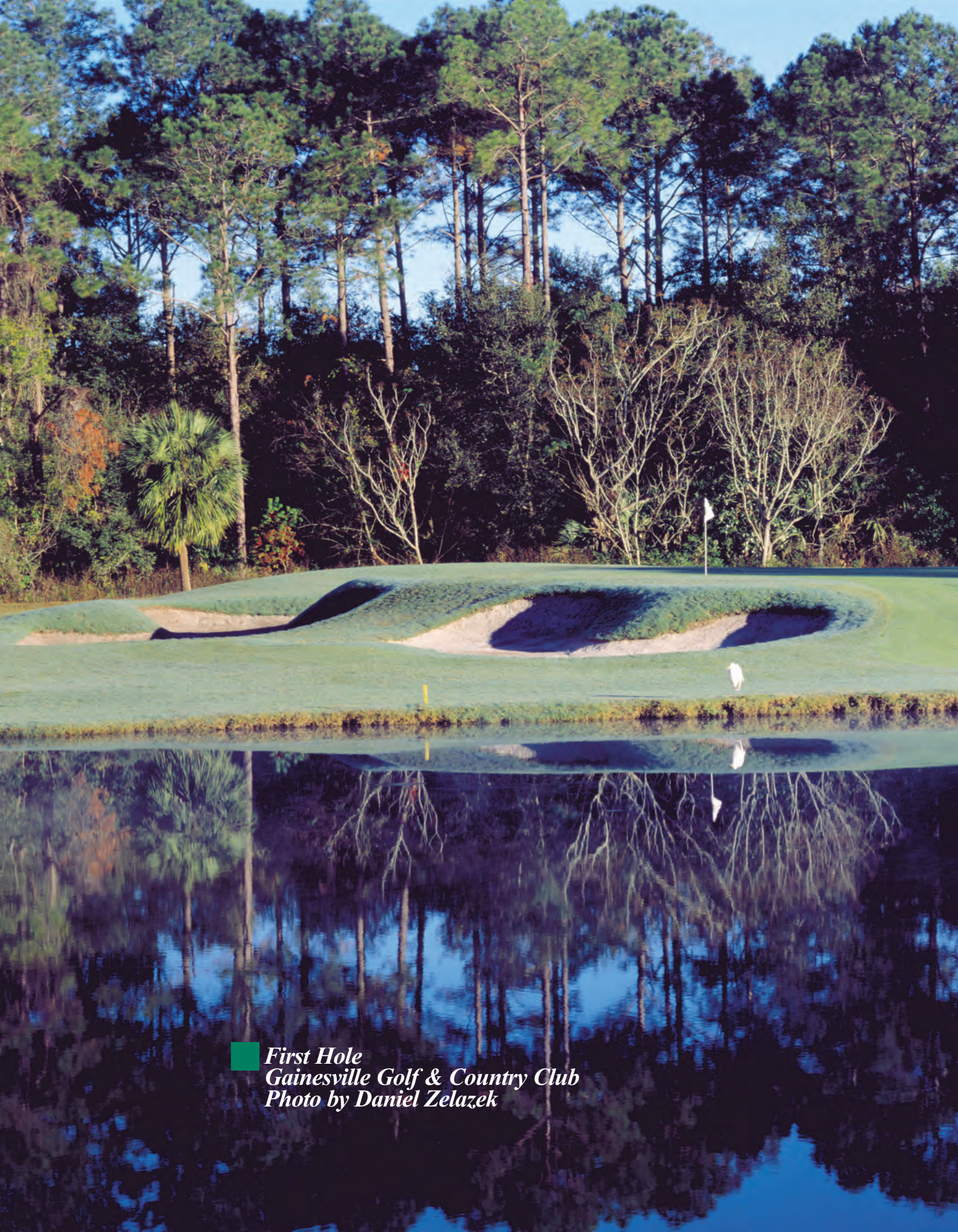
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*First Hole
Gainesville Golf & Country Club
Photo by Daniel Zelazek*



GAINSVILLE GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB

Forty-four Years and Three Superintendents Later...

By Joel Jackson

Overlooking Payne's Prairie, the Gainesville G&CC clubhouse is a portal for wildlife to meander into the woodsy southwest suburbs of this Florida college town. Located west of I-75 and just off Williston Rd, this certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary's wildlife inventory runs from A to Z according to superin-

tendent Buddy Keene. "You name it we've got it," proclaims Keene, who has been managing the 120-acre golf course since 1995. Keene added, "We have had several articles in the local paper reporting our course as being environmentally friendly and we're proud of that fact."

"This morning two foxes came trotting past our maintenance area, and this time of year the white-tailed deer have been wandering

around the course lately feeding on the acorns. A few wild hogs have also been rooting for the acorns, but they haven't been a real problem so far. I saw a couple of bobcats a few weeks ago, and even a coyote behind No. 2 green. We also have a nice population of eastern bluebirds taking advantage of the nesting boxes that we installed. We also see a fair amount of wild turkey wandering around the grounds. Once I

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picked up a baby alligator in one of our ponds and the momma gator wasn't too happy with me. I put junior down and made a strategic and hasty retreat. It was a little hairy there for a moment."

Keene, an avid outdoorsman, replaced the late, legendary Jeff Hayden in 1995 as only the third superintendent in the 44-year history of the course. Hayden took over for Charles Brasington, the original pro-superintendent in 1988, and groomed Keene as his replacement. Says Keene, "Jeff was an excellent mentor, a good friend, and almost like a big brother or father figure to me." The longevity of these superintendents has provided a stable yet progressive atmosphere at the club for getting things done and providing good playing conditions for the members over the years.

Recently, the club hosted three professional golf events, two of which were televised: the Nike Tour and subsequently the Buy.com Tour for developing PGA Tour players. Keene said, "I'd like to host another event like that. I love that kind of pressure to perform. I respond better to pressure. Tell me what you want and I can do it. I don't like it when I have to guess or wonder what you want."

The location of the Gainesville G&CC has its own built-in demands for growing high-quality turfgrass that meets the expectations of avid golfers. The mature trees in the

area cast long shadows and require Keene and company to find ways to manage the shade, a natural enemy to healthy turfgrass. The mostly clay-like soils drain slowly, and so an ongoing drainage program is in place to solve wet spots that crop up around the low-lying areas on the course. And the last major challenge is from isolated but vigorous populations of nematodes in the few sandy fairway areas and on the sand-based greens.

Because of the proximity of the Payne's Prairie Preserve, Keene takes a very proactive IPM approach on the course. Says Keene, "We have recorded lance nematode counts of over 1200 per cc of soil in some green samples, and so we have worked with the university nematologists over the years to find ways to control them. I generally try to grow the turf out of the stress and have used NemaCur sparingly only when they don't respond to extra fertility and watering. We have used some of the NeoTec product on the greens and have noticed some better transitions in the spring on otherwise weak greens."

In his overall pest-management program, Keene treats all curative applications of chemicals with a spot-treatment approach. The only large-scale applications are with Barricade and Ronstar pre-emergent herbicides applied in the fall and spring to prevent ryegrass or crabgrass and goosegrass germination, thus reducing



A flawless putting green; the perfect place to practice. Photo by Daniel Zelazek.

the total amount of herbicides needing to be applied to the course.

But pest problems take a back seat to dealing with shade issues. People revere trees, those majestic wind-whispering giants that dwarf our homes and sometimes our golf courses. In the right locations, trees can accent and define a hole and create a myriad decisions in strategically playing a hole. But, should the designer tuck a green into a shady glen or a short-sighted green committee plant trees which seem innocent until they grow and spread, the golf turf and playing conditions will eventually suffer.

It is a simple rule of nature - turfgrass

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needs and thrives on sunlight. It does not do well in shade and when you mow it down to 1/8-inch putting-green height, it is sheer folly to expect anything except thin turf, algae and bare ground.

Superintendents and agronomists have been trying to educate golfers about this undeniable fact, but the love of trees is difficult to overcome.

It is belatedly satisfying to finally hear golfers admit that turf managers were right after all when a tree is either removed or aggressively pruned to allow sunlight to reach the turf and the grass rebounds and fills in the bare spots and becomes a playable putting surface once again. Such is the ongoing discussion at many golf courses around the country and superintendents like Keene patiently seek the understanding of the golfers as they deal with shaded turf areas.

Two of Keene's toughest challenges are a couple of tees that get very little sunlight during certain times of the year. Keene said, "We have sodded one of the tees with zoysiagrass, which tolerates shade better than bermudagrass, and it has done better. It still gets a little thin, but it is easier to bring back. The biggest problem is that the bermudagrass can't compete with the overseeded ryegrass and we end up with big bare areas in the spring during transition. We will likely plant zoysia on the other tee as well and see how it does."

On the couple of greens impacted by shade, Keene has been able to either prune or remove the trees causing the most shade problems, but it is an ongoing issue as the limbs grow back and fill in or other trees grow taller and spread.

The Gainesville G&CC turfgrass palette is an interesting mix of old and new. Most of the fairways are mainly Ormond bermuda-



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Early morning shadows across the 10th green. Photo by Daniel Zelazek.

grass, one of the oldest varieties used on golf courses. There are a couple of Tifway 419 and Greg Norman GN1 fairways as well. The greens are 11-year old Tifdwarf with some of the typical off-type patches in them.

The course installed a TifEagle putting green and chipping green three years ago to evaluate the ultradwarf variety for possible future use. Keene says that the differences in manage-

ment practices between Tifdwarf and TifEagle makes for extra work in having different mowing and verticutting heights and schedules. Clubs really need to do their homework on these new varieties. There were a lot of problems cropping up on ultradwarfs during this rainy summer.

On holes 1-18 however, Keene has established a workable routine that keeps the greens in great shape. Keene says, "We aerify three

times a year in March, June and August and in the summer growing season we verticut three or four times, and during spring transition we verticut lightly on a weekly basis until the bermudagrass fills in. We topdress every couple of weeks during the summer, which allows us to keep the speeds faster without having to mow too low. We must be doing something right as our most recent soil tests came back showing a percolation rate

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Fun Facts

Here are some things you may not know about our cover story superintendent

1. **Car:** Dodge Ram 4x4 off road. "Can't dodge it? Ram it!"
2. **The last good movie I saw:** "Unforgiven"
3. **I stay home to watch:** The Weather Channel,

Fox News, and The O'Reilly Factor

4. **The book I've been reading:** *The Art of War*
5. **Favorite meal:** Steak and lobster
6. **Favorite performers:** Toby Keith, Hank Williams, Jr., and George Wallace, the comedian

7. **Prized possessions:** My dog "Bear" and my dad's military gun collection
8. **Personal Heroes:** My dad, John Wayne for what his movie characters stood for, and Charles Bronson
9. **Nobody knows that I:** Work out three times a week with former Gator star center Zac Zedalis.
10. **I'm better than anyone else when it comes to:** Seeing through the B.S.
11. **If I could do it over:** I would have played college football
12. **I'd give anything to meet:** John Wayne, Clint Eastwood, George Bush, Toby Keith and Hank Williams, Jr.
13. **My Fantasy is:** To race trucks across the desert
14. **The one thing I can't stand:** Incompetent individuals
15. **If I could change one thing about myself:** I would be more patient
16. **My most irrational act:** Can't think of any. I like to think things out before acting
17. **My most humbling experience:** Playing golf
18. **The words that best describe me:** Stubborn, honest, loyal, dedicated, relentless, caring, fun-loving



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